



Southern California Fair

46th District Agricultural Association

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For Immediate Release

SAMMY TANNER NAMED GRAND MARSHAL OF AMERICAN FLAT TRACK FINAL AT SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FAIR!

(Perris, CA, July 28, 2017) Carl Wuersch, CEO of the Southern California Fair, is pleased to announce that legendary motorcycle racer Sammy Tanner has been named “Grand Marshal” of the October 7th American Flat Track Final. The race will take place at Perris Auto Speedway during the 104th Annual Southern California Fair on the SoCal Fair and Event Center.

A native of Texas, Tanner began racing motorcycles as a youngster and he carved out not only a very successful career as a racer, but as a showman as well. In the 1960’s, his name was synonymous for winning and by the time his legendary career had ended, he had amassed over 400 victories. Among them was seven Grand National triumphs. Included in the GN wins were four at the track he first came west to race on, legendary Ascot Park in Gardena, California. He was the only rider to win Nationals at Ascot on two different bikes (BSA and Triumph). Another of his seven first place GN finishes was on the famous Springfield mile aboard a BSA in 1964.



Sammy Tanner with owner Jimmie O’Dell (in the white BSA jacket), after winning the AMA 5 Mile National at Elkhorn, Wisconsin in 1966. Jack Hall Photo.

“Sammy is going to be our Grand Marshal for the American Flat Track Final,” Wuersch said. “It will make a great show for us to have him here. When I made up the list of people I thought we would ask, he was at the very top. I have known him a lot of years. I think everybody pretty much knows Sammy Tanner. He is a name in the industry that is tops and he was a sensational rider. His career as a racer ended years ago, but he has stayed involved with the sport and has always tried to make it better.”

In addition to his prowess as a Flat Track racer, Tanner also had a few goes at road racing and speedway. He dabbled in sprint cars in 1959 and seven years later was lined up to drive for now National Sprint Car Hall of Fame car owner, Bruce Bromme Sr. However, seeing a fiery sprint car crash at Springfield changed his mind.

Always the entertainer, Tanner never raced the Bromme sprinter, but he did race against a sprint car in a rather rare event. It was a special match race that pitted Tanner on his motorcycle against rough and tumble Don Hawley who was driving a sprint car. Tanner had another motorcycle racer booked to take on Hawley, but when he could not get insurance on the other rider, he went ahead and did it himself.

These days Tanner is still busy working with and supporting racers of the two-wheeled and four-wheeled varieties. He has been an Arai Helmet distributor since 1979 and has helped thousands of racers realize their racing dreams. Tanner’s website can be reached at the following link: <http://sammytanner.com/>

Tickets for the race, which will feature the best flat track racers from across North America and which could well decide the AFT 2017 championships, are already on sale online. Reserved seats for the race are \$20.00 and include a free ticket to the annual fair. General admission tickets are \$5.00 and require the purchase of a \$10.00 fair admission ticket. Advance tickets for the historic race are available 24-hours a day by clicking on the following link: <http://bit.ly/2sVZ2Zg>. Fans who ride a motorcycle to the race will receive free parking on the fairgrounds.

The race will be the first National in Southern California staged on anything, but a horse racing track since Ascot closed in 1990. On race day, gates will open at 11:00 AM and open practice will begin around 1:00 PM. Qualifying will be at 5:00 and the first race will roll off the line at 7:00.

The American Flat Track Series, which matches the top Flat Track racers on oval and TT tracks, opened the campaign at Daytona International Speedway in March and will feature races in 13 different states in 2017. Fans can get a sneak peek at the exciting action they will see in October at the fair by watching previous rounds on NBSCN.

Before and after the race, fans will be able to enjoy a day and night at the Southern California Fair that will include carnival rides, great fair food, livestock, midway games, music, displays and more.

To keep up with the daily happenings of the SoCal Fair and Event Center and the AFT, fans can use the following social media links.

Website: <http://www.socalfair.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/socalfair/>

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To keep up with the American Flat Track Series

Website: <http://www.americanflattrack.com/>

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