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**Olympic Gold Medalist & Top Alcohol Funny Car Driver Marty Nothstein Finishes 8th In Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race**

*Nothstein Turns His Attention To Beginning of NHRA Season Next Week Outside of Atlanta*

**/24-7PressRelease/** - LONG BEACH, CA, April 23, 2008 - Former Olympic Gold Medal cyclist and current NHRA Top Alcohol Funny Car driver Marty Nothstein finished eighth overall in the 32nd Annual Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race on Saturday, April 19, 2008 in Long Beach, California.

Nothstein, who qualified second overall during Friday's half-hour qualification round beating out fellow NHRA drag racers Tony Pedregon and Whit Bazemore, was involved in two crashes during the race. Both incidents involved Bazemore, who is one of Marty's best friends away from the track.

"You never think your best friend is going to be the one to knock you out of contention, especially in a charity race," said Nothstein, who will kick-off his 2008 Top Alcohol Funny Car season next weekend at the NHRA Southern Nationals outside of Atlanta. "When Whit and I tangled on Lap 5, I felt I was in position to challenge for the win. The car was working great, and I felt I could at least make a run at the overall race winner Mike Skinner. By the time we hooked-up again on the final turn of the race, I was just trying to win back my position, that he stole from me four laps earlier."

"Overall though, it was a great experience for me," added Nothstein. "To be faster and qualify ahead of great pros like Pedregon and Bazemore during my first-ever race on a road course is incredible!"

The 10-lap race, featuring identically prepared, race-ready Toyota Scions, brought together 12 celebrities from television, film and sports to race against six professional drivers to raise money for children's hospitals in Southern California. The Toyota Pro-Celebrity Race is a support race for the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, which will be run on Sunday, April 20, 2008.

NASCAR Sprint Cup and Craftsman Truck series veteran Mike Skinner was the overall race winner. Skinner, who won the 2007 race, passed ESPN Pit Reporter Jamie Little on the next to last lap to defend his title. Little won the Celebrity portion of the race.

Television celebrities competing were Raymond Cruz from TNT's "The Closer", William Fichtner from "Prison Break", Daniel Goddard from "The Young and the Restless", Drew Lachey from Dancing With the Stars and former boy band 98 Degrees and Wilmer Valderrama from That 70's Show. Sports celebrities included NFL Hall of Fame running back Eric Dickerson and Basketball Hall of Famer Nancy Lieberman and John Salley from Fox's "The Best Damn Sports Show, Period".

**About Blitz Group LLC**

Blitz Group is a Chicago-based, award-winning boutique media company that specializes in media strategy, event planning and television production.

**About Marty Nothstein**

Marty 'The Blade' Nothstein is one of the most recognized cyclists in the world having won an Olympic Gold Medal in the 2000 Games in Sydney and Silver in Atlanta in 1996. Nothstein is America's most decorated track cyclist with 35 U.S. National titles, three World Championships, four Pan-American Games Gold Medals, plus he's a World and Olympic record holder. Since retiring from professional cycling in 2006, Marty is focusing his need for speed in the world of drag racing. 2008 will mark Marty's third season in a Top Alcohol Funny Car. Nothstein will drive for Jay Blake, the Founder and Crew Chief of "The Follow A Dream Team". Blake is the only totally blind crew chief in the world of motorsports. After a successful rookie season in 2006 in his Top Alcohol Funny Car, Nothstein found the winner's circle twice during the 2007 NHRA Lucas Oil Drag Racing Series season.

**About Follow A Dream**

Established in 1999, Follow A Dream is a non-profit 501 (3) organization. The organization's message is uniquely delivered through NHRA drag racing as its medium. As racing's only totally blind, race crew chief, Follow A Dream Founder, Jay Blake draws upon his personal experience of overcoming adversity and achieving his dream of auto racing, and shares his inspiration with others. For more information go to [www.followadream.org](http://www.followadream.org).