

Our Story: Racing and Awareness

Background: Johan Schwartz Racing is a team effort for Johan and me at home, at the race track, and running our business interests. We have two very active children, Johan (11) and Alden (7) who love soccer, swimming and tennis. Together we ran our own business, Endurance Karting, for 12 years, an arrive and drive format using karts for schools, endurance races, charity events and corporate team building events. In 2013, we sold our business to pursue other opportunities, one of which was to focus on Johan's personal racing, road racing to be exact.

Last October, we decided to dedicate our time to developing the necessary sponsorship and marketing to put Johan in a car for a full race season and selected the road racing series Pirelli World Challenge. Going into this project, we knew Johan would have a good shot at the championship, but most certainly podium finishes. We determined it would be best to share our successes for a great cause.

Cancer: My family has a deep and long history with cancer. My grandmother died at 45 from cancer (She had two different kinds.), one of her sisters died at 42 leaving two young children, and her eight other siblings all died of cancer. In 1979, my family became part of a study by a young researcher named Mary-Claire King, who is credited with discovering the BRCA 1 gene in 1990. My family, a large and extended one with 10 Tomkins children at my grandmother's generation, has continued in the study. Many of my father's generation and their children carry the cancer gene. My father does not; therefore, I am not a carrier. Not being a carrier has only fueled my desire to serve the cancer community, as so many members of my family carry a burden of being a genetic carrier.

Cancer and Racing: Now the part of the story where racing and Prostate Cancer come together: Both Johan's and my mothers are cancer survivors (breast and uterine cancer, respectively), so cancer has hit close to home. Johan and I both have marketing and business backgrounds that spans beyond our go-kart business; Johan has an MBA and worked for Fidelity and Mullen Advertising, and I worked in telecom, pharmaceuticals and HR.

About four years ago while driving home, we passed a pink backhoe on display for Breast Cancer Awareness. Pink was also making its way onto several NASCAR cars at this time. In that moment, I asked aloud, "Why isn't anyone doing this for men? Does Prostate Cancer have a color and ribbon?" I said to Johan, "When we are able to get you in a race car full time, we are going to promote men's health." Immediately upon returning home, I discovered Prostate Cancer has a light blue ribbon.

2015 Racing Season: Fast forward to last October. The time is finally here to put Johan in a car for the full season, and we have made Prostate Cancer Awareness: Early Detection + Education = Best Outcome our cause and campaign. My research led me to the non-profit ZERO Cancer: The End of Prostate Cancer. We reached out and established a partnership to bring awareness to the racing community. We looked to our immediate network for sponsorship with the goal of making this season about Prostate Cancer Awareness our top priority. Our network was enthused; however, we had missed most budget deadlines, so we knew we were likely going to come up short in funding the car. That did not deter us because this was too important. John McAleer with CAS Group believed us and our cause and became a gold level sponsor. Smaller sponsors have also helped get us this far in the season, including Custom

DieCasts, Eventville, Celestial Products and TechSport Racing.

In the middle of pulling all of this together and just days before Christmas, my Uncle Dennis announced he had been diagnosed with aggressive prostate cancer. It has hit close to home for sure. My uncle, a BRCA II gene carrier, has regular checkups, and still here he is, a battle ahead of him. I am only further fueled. We have to get the word out there. We have to make a difference.

Mid-Season Report: The season is now half way completed – we have three event weekends behind us, a total of nine races, and Johan has first place finishes/points for six of those nine races in addition to a 3rd place finish, numerous fastest lap of the race honors, most laps led and other special awards. These have been wins not only for Johan, but also for Prostate Cancer Awareness and ZEROcancer.org, as we have worked hard and gotten great coverage with the commentators during live streaming of the races and the one- hour highlight show on CBS Sports one week after each event weekend. There have been successes, and as of now, the beginning of August, Johan leads the championship standings by one point. We plan to finish the season strong.

Our final races are coming up, (We have races at Mid-Ohio and Miller in August and Laguna Seca in September.) and we are excited that the season finale is the weekend prior to National Prostate Cancer Awareness week. We have the opportunity to make a splash and plan to do just that!

Goals in finishing our season: Our goal is to reach out to our network to help us finish the season while also doing something unique on the racecar in celebration of all the men affected by prostate cancer and their families. We are running a funding campaign to cover our expenses for the last two race events of the season. Monies raised are specifically for expenses incurred for the race and the marketing done for Prostate Cancer Awareness.

Each person's donation will also be represented by a blue ribbon decal on the racecar in September's finale. Two ribbon choices will be available: In Celebration of (Survivors and Warriors – those going through treatment) and In Memory of (Champions – those who battled hard and have passed on), and the person's name will be written on the ribbon on the car. Additionally, our goal is to ramp up some of our projects around bringing awareness through specific events that we know we will be effective.

We know this funding campaign is more than an opportunity to raise funds to finish the season. It is an opportunity to bring a call to action for men to schedule their annual physical and to include a prostate cancer screening.