

## Permatex Supports Jay Blake's "Race Towards a Dream"

Think about the complexities of working on a supercharged engine, the kind that powers a NHRA dragster. Now try doing it with your eyes closed. That's what **Jay Blake** faces every day. As the only totally blind crew chief in the world of auto racing, Jay has gone on to make his 2002 Dodge Avenger, an Alcohol Funny Car, one of the more successful dragsters in NHRA competition. At the same time, Blake is motivating people around the country through his **Follow A Dream** foundation.

Jay Blake has been blind since an industrial forklift tire blew up in his face in 1997, sending him 45 feet through the air and nearly killing him. Air lifted from his work site in Cape Cod to Massachusetts General in Boston, it took a team of surgeons over 10 hours to reconstruct his features.

Today, Jay spends his time working closely with his racing team on their methanol-powered, carbon fiber Funny Car, fine-tuning its 3,000 hp, 526 CID aluminum hemi engine. Blake gets his hands as greasy as any other crew chief, making his way around intricate engine parts as well or better than before his accident. Having his own racecar and crew had been a lifelong dream, but in addition to NHRA racing, Blake has been spreading the word of hope and commitment through his non-profit Follow A Dream foundation, with its mission of demonstrating to both kids and adults how the power of positive thinking and self determination can help overcome adversity.



Jay Blake and his alcohol funny race car with a 3,000 hp, 526 CID aluminum hemi engine.

Permatex is a proud co-sponsor of the Follow A Dream racing team, and on Tuesday at **AAPEX**, Jay will be at the Permatex booth, # 3218, signing "Hero Cards" for visitors. He'd enjoy personally discussing his car, racing career and his Follow A Dream motivational message.

In the difficult days after his accident, Jay took that important first step in following his dream of forming his own racing team. Making his way around the house to become acclimated to his surroundings, Blake wandered into the garage, managed to find his toolbox, groped around until he felt a combination wrench, then realized he still had the ability to accurately identify tools just by his sense of touch.

"That completely turned my thinking around," says Blake. " I immediately wanted to learn to do everything I could ... all over again." During months of physical rehab, the images of that dream grew even stronger, and the thought of forming his own racing team became consuming. He started thinking of ways to raise money to purchase a dragster, while at the same time not forgetting the importance of passing the word on to others about overcoming adversity.

With that, the Follow A Dream foundation was born. For five years Blake has raced around the country as a motivational speaker, with a goal of helping convince others, especially those with disabilities, that there was so much more in life to look forward to, to experience and accomplish. Follow A Dream currently reaches over a half-million people annually through presentations at hospitals, rehab centers, corporations, automotive vocational institutes and many other groups. Jay's objective is simple: to inspire people to shift into positive thinking and to follow their dreams through self-determination and teamwork.

And it's that very teamwork that has helped make the Follow A Dream Funny Car one of the more successful on the NHRA racing circuit. Immediately after Jay's visit at Permatex, his team moves on to California's Pomona Raceway for the ACSC NHRA finals, Nov. 3-6.

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