



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **The OPTIMA® Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational: First Finalists Revealed**

*OPTIMA's invitation-only event to showcase the finest street machines in the world  
on the heels of SEMA 2009*

October 2, 2009 (MILWAUKEE) – OPTIMA® Batteries announces the first group of drivers and one-of-a-kind vehicles selected to participate in the OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational, presented by RideTech and K&N Filters. The invitation-only event will take place on Saturday, November 7 – right on the heels of the leading specialty automotive trade event, the SEMA Show. Held at Spring Mountain Motorsports Ranch in Pahrump, Nevada, this Invitational will challenge up to 40 of the finest street machines in the world, showcasing the quality, performance and talent of the country's top builders, manufacturers and car owners.

“These vehicle finalists are leaders in the aftermarket performance automotive industry and are carefully chosen to represent what specialty vehicles and aftermarket products are capable of,” says Cam Douglass, director of product development and marketing for OPTIMA Batteries. “The spirit of the competition is to exhibit the true potential of the vehicles showcased at SEMA, proving they are built for speed and performance, not just for looking good on the show floor.”

Hundreds of car owners submitted entries in hopes of participating in this unique event. OPTIMA and its committee of automotive industry experts, including manufacturers, media, top builders and designers, are using strict criteria to select up to 40 finalists. This elite group will include some of the most well-known drivers and vehicles in the industry.

Phil Gerber is among those ranks driving Barry Blomquist's "C1RS" '62 Corvette. Designed by The Roadster Shop and artist Eric Brockmeyer, the vehicle won the 2009 Good Guys Street

Machine of the Year title and is now gearing up to compete for the OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car of the Year title. "C1RS served as the launch platform for our new C1 line of Corvette chassis," says Gerber. "Everything on the 'Vette was changed, massaged, smoothed and redesigned by The Roadster Shop's dedicated team during the intense 10-month build, all while staying true to Brockmeyer's original design."

Gerber competed in the 2008 OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational in a '70 Chevelle, making it under the 2-minute mark on the track and only 1.5 seconds away from the winning autocross time. However, this year's '62 Corvette entry, with its 618-horsepower LS7 by Turnkey Engines, produces 640 foot-pounds of torque and is sure to be tough competition. The 2008 OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car of the Year, "Bad Penny," is a '68 Camaro decked out in full pro-touring trim and will return to the Invitational to defend its title.

Charlie Lillard, the owner of a '69 Camaro known as "Jackass," and Mark Stielow, the vehicle builder, will both drive in varying segments of the Invitational. "Jackass," the first hot rod powered by the LS9 V-8 crate engine, has a host of refinements and innovations. It sports carbon-ceramic Brembo ZR1 Corvette disc brakes and C6 Corvette front suspension on the Art Morrison front sub-frame. "Jackass" also includes a front spoiler relocater kit, a stainless gas tank and coolers for the transmission and rear end.

Hot Rod Jim's '57 Chevy pickup truck is also one of the first OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational entries. This '57 Chevy truck will make a unique addition to the competing line-up with its C5 / C6 Corvette Suspension and C6 Z06 Corvette brakes on a fully CAD-designed frame. "We will drive it from Austin to Vegas for SEMA," says Russell Alexander of Hot Rod Jim's. "It is a prototype for a '55-'59 Chevy and GMC truck frame project we're working on and I look forward to seeing it compete against the other more well-known vehicles."

The remaining invitation recipients will be announced at a press conference in the OPTIMA booth #23561 during the SEMA Show on Thursday, November 5 at 10:00 a.m. PT. For the current list of the OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational participants or more information on the event, visit <http://www.optimainvitational.com/>

### **Competition Details**

The participating drivers and vehicles will compete on a closed-circuit professional road-racing course in four categories that include acceleration/braking, autocross, road course laps and

styling. The three racing segments of the event will be timed and the styling segment will be judged on overall vehicle quality, design and craftsmanship. Styling points will be awarded on a 1 to 10 scale, with 1 being the best and 10 being the worst.

The vehicle race times are cumulative and combined with the styling points for the overall scoring. Only those competing in all four segments of the Invitational will be eligible to win the OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car of the Year title. All vehicles must be street-legal and pass a basic safety and technical inspection at the track before the Invitational begins. No purpose-built race cars or kit cars will be allowed and DOT-approved tires are required to compete.

The OPTIMA Batteries Ultimate Street Car Invitational sponsors include: (Presenting) RideTech; K&N Filters; (Platinum) Speed by Spectre; BFGoodrich; Baer Brakes; (Gold) MagnaFlow; Bowler Transmissions; MSD; (Silver) The Roadster Shop; Lateral-G.net; Pfaff Designs; (Bronze) Fesler-Moss Camaro; Mr. Norm's Garage; FM3 Performance Marketing; (Product) Detroit Speed & Engineering; Vintage Air; Eibach Springs; Classic Instruments; (Associate) Good Guys Rod & Custom; Shelby Automobiles; Silver State Classic Challenge; and Protouring.com.

#### **About OPTIMA® Batteries**

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