



**Contact:** Brandon Welch  
858-414-1837  
9520 Candida St., San Diego, CA 92126  
brandon@ismsports.net

## **CHUCK BEAL, BRANDON WELCH LEARN A LESSON IN TEAMWORK AS “DISTINGUISHED VISITORS” ON USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

San Diego, CA – **Chuck Beal** and **Brandon Welch** of independent Nitro Funny Car team Beal Racing were treated to an all-access stay aboard the US Navy’s aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln August 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The trip included an exclusive look at the inner-workings of a fully functioning aircraft carrier, where the two learned how to bring large-scale leadership and teamwork to drag racing.

Invited on the trip by Rear Admiral Len Hering, Commander Navy Region Southwest, team owner Beal and driver Welch flew on a C-2A Greyhound from NAS North Island in San Diego to the USS Abraham Lincoln, which was conducting training in international waters off the coast of Mexico. The two, along with a group of a dozen community and business leaders experienced an arrested tailhook landing aboard the carrier, where the plane came to a dead stop from 140mph in only 2 seconds.

From there, the group toured all corners of the ship to see the amount of organization, training and resources required to run a floating American airstrip anywhere in the world.

“The carrier is really like a floating city,” Beal commented. “5,000 men and women, mostly 18-22 years old are trained in complex tasks to keep all functions of the ship running smoothly. From flying the jets to preparing food in the mess halls, each sailor has a role critical to the success of the carrier’s mission. Each individual unit works together on complex tasks to serve a mission that is integral to the overall mission of the ship. The outcome of all of this teamwork is nothing short of incredible.”

“We were able to watch F18s take off and land on the deck just feet from where we were standing. The amount of precision and control needed to land one of these jets on the flight deck was truly amazing.”

During the night flight event, the group met in the Carrier Strike Group Commander’s bridge and watched catapult launches and aircraft recovery from a bird’s eye view.

Welch recalled his first interaction with Carrier Strike Group Commander, Rear Admiral Scott Van Buskirk.

“Rear Admiral Van Buskirk opened up his office to our group, explaining all of the action on the deck. I was blown away when the admiral knew all about Chuck and me. He was a drag racing fan and had looked up our brand new website, [www.chuckbealracing.com](http://www.chuckbealracing.com) and read all about our team. He ribbed me about my grades at San Diego State and talked to Chuck about his days racing Alcohol Funny Cars.”

From the Commander’s bridge, Beal and Welch received a special treat when Senior Chief Air Traffic Controllers Bill Thompson and Gordon “Flaps” Carlon, the latter a volunteer crewmember on Beal’s Funny Car, invited them into the Carrier Controlled Approach room during the final aircraft recovery session of the evening. Senior Chief Thompson gave them a personal showcase on how a dozen men and women direct a group of aircraft to land



within 60 seconds of each other on a floating airstrip roughly the size of a football field in the middle of the Pacific Ocean at night.

“Watching the air traffic controllers work together to bring in all those jets was a great example of an individual team working to serve the overall mission of the carrier. With the leadership of experienced senior enlisted personnel, the team of young, relatively inexperienced controllers was able to perform at an extremely high level,” said Beal.

Beal, Welch and the group stayed overnight in officer’s staterooms aboard the ship.

The second and final day of the embark involved touring more of the ship’s countless departments, including jet maintenance facilities, medical and dental wards, and the “Ready Room” where F18 pilots are briefed prior to their missions.

The trip ended with a catapult launch off the Lincoln in a C-2A. The plane accelerated to 140mph in 2 seconds as it was catapulted off the end of the ship.

To Beal, the take-off and landing felt strangely familiar.

“I think that catapult launch and tailhook arrested landing were about as close as you can get to the forces experienced in driving a Nitro Funny Car. And watching the flight deck crew work together to prepare the jets for takeoff reminded me of my team working together to prepare my Funny Car for launch on the starting line. What a rush!”

Beal took away a lesson in Navy leadership and teamwork.

“Overall, I was surprised by the similarities between the teams I saw on the USS Abraham Lincoln and our team. Much like the ship’s Commanding Officer, I provide the overall vision and objectives, while a couple guys that have worked for me for many years lead my pit crew mechanics to rise to a level of precision and performance that would be impossible otherwise. No matter how monumental the task, the young men and women on that carrier bear down and focus intently to complete their individual objectives, knowing that the ship couldn’t function without them. I was really motivated to take what the Navy does so well and apply that mentality to my race team.

“I’d like to thank the entire crew of the USS Abraham Lincoln for opening up their workplace for us, and LCDR Shannon Corkill and Rear Admiral Len Hering for helping to make this trip possible.”

With that amazing experience behind them, Beal Racing is aggressively pursuing marketing partners for 2008 and beyond while anxiously waiting out the summer heat to continue licensing Brandon Welch this fall.

#### ABOUT BEAL RACING:

Beal Racing is a San Diego-based Nitro Funny Car team owned by 40-year drag racing veteran Chuck Beal and driven by Brandon Welch. The team currently competes on the NHRA POWERade Drag Racing Series. For more information please visit [www.ChuckBealRacing.com](http://www.ChuckBealRacing.com) or contact Brandon Welch at (858) 414-1837.

###