

Delwyn Thornton Wins the 2010 North American IRWIN Tools Ultimate Tradesman Challenge

BRISTOL, TENN. (Aug. 23, 2010) — Delwyn Thornton of Brandon, Mississippi was crowned North American Champion of the 2010 IRWIN® Tools Ultimate Tradesman Challenge on Friday, August 20, 2010 during the IRWIN Tools Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway. IRWIN Tools, a world-class manufacturer and marketer of professional hand tools and power tool accessories, hosted Thornton and 22 other finalists at the IRWIN Tools Night Race to compete for a chance to be the North American Ultimate Tradesman.

Thornton, a shoe repair man, bested Frank Blatz, with a winning time of 28.50 seconds after he completed a timed series of precise tasks that included gripping, marking, clamping, sawing, and drilling. To watch Thornton outperform Blatz in the final round of the Ultimate Tradesman Challenge, visit <http://www.irwin.com/challenge/>.

“The past few days have been an absolute fantasy. I entered the Ultimate Tradesman Challenge completely unaware of the extent of the competition,” said Thornton. “I am grateful to IRWIN Tools for giving me an opportunity to compete with tools that I use everyday and learn more about tools that can contribute to my business.”

As the North American winner of the 2010 IRWIN Tools Ultimate Tradesman Challenge, Thornton served as the Grand Marshal of the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series IRWIN Tools Night Race at Bristol Motor Speedway, and gave the famous command, “Gentlemen, Start Your Engines.” Thornton also won a year’s supply of Cat® footwear and a custom IRWIN Tools Mustang GT Premium Pace Car – the official pace car of the IRWIN Tools Night Race at Bristol.

Thornton will now represent North America at the Ultimate Tradesman Challenge World Finals in March of 2011, again at Bristol Motor Speedway, where he’ll face off against five other tradesmen from around the world to compete to become the Worldwide IRWIN Tools Ultimate Tradesman. The tradesman with the top time will win the grand prize – a chance to win \$1 MILLION!

“Each year that we have hosted the IRWIN Tools Ultimate Tradesman Challenge, we’ve been amazed at the skill and passion tradesmen bring to this competition,” said Curt Rahilly, VP of Marketing for IRWIN Tools. “IRWIN is serious about celebrating tradesmen who do their jobs each and every day, always reaching for greatness in all that they do. We congratulate Delwyn for his big win. And we thank not only the other 22 competitors who traveled to Bristol to compete in our North American Championship, but all of the hundreds of men and women who competed throughout the year in qualifying events across North America.”

About IRWIN Tools:

IRWIN Tools manufactures and distributes a broad line of hand tools and power tool accessories including VISE-GRIP® pliers and wrenches, MARATHON® saw blades, QUICK-GRIP® clamping tools, SPEEDBOR® wood drilling bits, STRAIT-LINE® marking tools, UNIBIT® step drill bits, and HANSON® taps and dies. IRWIN Tools is a part of Newell Rubbermaid’s global portfolio of brands. For more information, call 1-800-GO-IRWIN or visit www.irwin.com.

About the IRWIN Tools Ultimate Tradesman Challenge:

IRWIN’s Ultimate Tradesman Challenge is a global competition where skilled tradesmen perform a series of precise tasks in a race against the clock to “Grip It! Rip It! And Drive It!” Contestants first use IRWIN VISE-GRIP® GrooveLock pliers to remove two (2) pipe fittings from a qualifying channel (Grip It). He/she then uses an IRWIN square and pencil to mark three (3) lines on a standard 2” x 4” x 24” board, at pre-marked positions. Contestants then slide the board into a cutting position and securely clamp it to the work surface with an IRWIN QUICK-GRIP® XP600 one-handed bar clamp. Contestants then use an IRWIN Universal Handsaw to cut the board on the line previously marked (Rip It). And finally, using an IRWIN SPEEDBOR® Max Speed drill bit, contestants drill two (2) holes in the board at the intersecting lines (Drive It), unclamp the board, place the clamp on the competition cart, and put the board in the qualifying channel. If the board fits accurately, the clock will automatically stop, and the challenge time will be noted. Speed; ability to remove pipe fittings; accurate marking; ability to clamp work securely; fast, straight cuts; and the ability to accurately drill holes are crucial to winning the challenge. The Ultimate Tradesman Challenge is a true test of on-the-job skills.

Visit www.irwin.com for details on the “task,” or to see a video of the challenge in action.

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)

<https://irwin.mediaroom.com/2010-08-23-Delwyn-Thornton-Wins-the-2010-North-American-IRWIN-Tools-Ultimate-Tradesman-Challenge>