

NATIONAL

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DRAGSTER



THREE FOR THREE

BROWN GOES ON UNPRECEDENTED TEAR TO KICK OFF PLAYOFFS

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED
MELLO YELLO SERIES (ST. LOUIS, READING), LUCAS OIL SERIES, AND SUMMIT RACING SERIES FINALS

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

by Jim Luikens

The record shows that **Danny Rowe's** car would not start for the first round of Pro Mod eliminations in St. Louis. Even though that's what the record shows, it does not begin to tell the story of Rowe's weekend. A fine 5.901 e.t. in the first qualifying session placed Rowe near the top of the qualifying sheet in third place. However, in the second qualifying round, Rowe lost traction at the start, resulting in a hard left into the left guardwall with his two-race-old '15 Corvette.

After quickly assessing the damage, Rowe and his team made the decision to summon the '68 Camaro from Tennessee that he had raced with through the Norwalk event earlier this year. An all-night drive resulted in the replacement Camaro arriving by 5 a.m. Saturday morning. The Corvette's entire driveline was then swapped into the Camaro with the conversion being finished before 8 a.m.

Following a soft 5.927 shakedown run in the third qualifying session, the team was ready for eliminations. After charging their batteries and cranking the car over in the pits to make sure everything was OK, the team headed for the starting line. There, the car only cranked over five times before the batteries failed and refused to crank any



Steven Whiteley

further. Back in the pits, a new set of batteries was installed, and the car started easily.

The body of Rowe's Corvette was damaged much more than the chassis. Luckily for Rowe, the team's chassis builder, Tim McAmis, is located in nearby eastern Missouri, and the Corvette's chassis was repaired in just four days. The car is now at the body shop with the idea that it will look as good as new by the time the NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series rolls into Las Vegas for its final stop of the 2015 season.

Steve Matussek, Rowe's teammate, had an equally forgettable, although not as costly, weekend in St. Louis. Racing at the NHRA Pro Mod Series stop that is the closest to his home and business, Matussek blew an engine in the first round of qualifying. After installing a new motor, he raced to the 13th starting spot in the qualified field. Unfortunately for Matussek, he rolled the beams in

his run against Troy Coughlin Sr. in the first round of eliminations. Despite having both team cars go out in round one of eliminations, team crew chief Jimmy Rector emphatically wants it known that the Rowe team is not made up of quitters and that they did everything possible to have a good showing.

Someone that did have a good showing at Gateway Motorsports Park was **Steven Whiteley**. He qualified No. 1 for the first time this season with a 5.820. It should be noted that his other two qualifying runs had elapsed times of 5.832 and 5.900 seconds. When you combine those three runs with his 5.833 and 5.925 runs in eliminations, Whiteley had an outstanding five-run average e.t. of 5.862 seconds. The only blot on Whiteley's St. Louis ledger was his second-round loss to eventual race winner Mike Knowles.

Other good showings were recorded by **Chip King** and **Gerry Capano**. King, now assisted by

Jason Hamstra, qualified a strong fifth in the field, and Capano's 5.927 in qualifying earned him his first-ever NHRA race-day start.

Knowles has only won two NHRA Pro Mod races thus far in his career, and both wins have come in St. Louis. Interestingly, both of those victories have been recorded against a driver with the last name of Smith. Von Smith was the 2014 runner-up, and Rickie Smith claimed that same honor in 2015. All nine Pro Mod races that have been contested so far this year have been won by a different person. Is it possible that we could see yet another first-time 2015 winner claim the final race in Las Vegas?

One person who hopes to break that no-repeat-winner streak is Norwalk champion **Mike Janis**. As the current points leader, Janis can clinch the 2015 Pro Mod season title with a Las Vegas victory. His team is currently leaking some sneak previews of new bodywork on social media that they are preparing for the Las Vegas event, so they are obviously taking the opportunity seriously. **ND**



Gerry Capano

PRO MOD

1. Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) . . . **5.820, 249.35**
2. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('13 Camaro) **5.848, 246.39**
3. Troy Coughlin Jr., Delaware, Ohio ('14 Corvette) **5.878, 253.61**
4. Troy Coughlin Sr., Delaware, Ohio ('15 Corvette) **5.882, 254.57**
5. Chip King, Semora, N.C. ('70 Charger) **5.888, 243.94**
6. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('15 Camaro) **5.889, 246.48**
7. Bill Glidden, Whiteland, Ind. ('10 Mustang) **5.889, 243.77**
8. Mike Knowles, Grand Junction, Colo. ('67 Mustang) **5.893, 238.17**
9. Mike Castellana, Muttontown, N.Y. ('15 Corvette) **5.897, 240.77**
10. Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('15 Corvette) **5.899, 245.09**
11. Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('15 Corvette) **5.901, 247.79**
12. Eric Latino, Port Perry, Ont. ('69 Camaro) **5.917, 245.36**
13. Steve Matussek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) **5.918, 247.20**
14. Gerry Capano, Greenville, Del. ('63 Corvette) **5.927, 241.54**
15. Pete Farber, Baldwinville, Mass. ('69 Daytona) **5.933, 247.34**
16. Harold Martin, New Hudson, Mich. ('15 Corvette) **5.944, 241.89**

ALTERNATES: Kenny Lang - 5.950, 245.27; Khalid alBalooshi - 5.958, 245.05; Shane Molinari - 5.977, 249.95; Clint Satterfield - 6.015, 242.36; Dan Stevenson - 6.139, 244.43; Doug Winters - 6.232, 238.72; Don Walsh - 7.096, 144.95; Jim Whiteley - 7.928, 120.01; Jay Payne - 7.985, 115.82.

PRO MOD CHAMPION
MIKE KNOWLES

5.833-249.12 S. WHITELEY (.066)	5.925-247.07 S. WHITELEY (.080)	6.141-192.19 JANIS (.032)	5.851-246.21 JANIS (.046)
9.484-99.97 MARTIN (.011)	5.888-241.28 KNOWLES (.020)	5.870-240.12 RAHAIM (.075)	5.926-246.80 FARBER (.050)
5.883-240.59 KNOWLES (.057)	5.912-243.28 KNOWLES (.033)	5.830-246.89 RAHAIM (.073)	5.882-243.46 (FOUL) GLIDDEN (-.016)
5.875-242.93 CASTELLANA (.153)	5.901-242.71 KNOWLES (.077)	5.953-244.52 SMITH (.044)	5.954-239.48 RAHAIM (.076)
7.068-160.35 COUGHLIN SR. (.029)	5.931-251.95 COUGHLIN SR. (.038)	5.974-238.68 CAPANO (.023)	LEFT BEFORE TREE COUGHLIN JR.
12.570-89.46 (FOUL) MATUSEK (-.009)	5.911-250.32 COUGHLIN SR. (.029)	5.894-245.58 SMITH (.050)	5.947-240.29 CAPANO (.253)
5.889-243.55 KING (.075)	5.923-242.10 KING (.077)	5.905-246.53 SMITH (.062)	5.917-245.90 SMITH (.141)
5.876-247.70 LATINO (.133)			BROKE ROWE

LOW E.T.: 5.820 - S. WHITELEY
TOP SPEED: 254.57 - COUGHLIN SR.