

NATIONAL

ISSUE 20 ★ VOLUME 54 ★ OCTOBER 4, 2013



www.NHRA.com

DRAGSTER



MOPAR MONOPOLY

FOR 50 YEARS, IT'S BEEN "MOPAR OR NO CAR" FOR THE TEUTON FAMILY

\$3.95 NationalDragster.net

FABULOUS FLOPPERS

IT'S NOT JUST THE NITRO THAT BRINGS TEARS TO THE EYES OF NOSTALGIA FUNNY CAR FANS

MEGA-COVERAGE ISSUE

MELLO YELLO, LUCAS OIL, AND SUMMIT SERIES FINALS REPORTS

PERIODICALS

DELIVER BY OCTOBER 4, 2013

Notes From the Pro Mod Reporter's Notebook

by Jim Luikens

Danny Rowe was the Pro Mod No. 1 qualifier in Charlotte with a strong 5.871. It was his fourth pole position of the year, and his four No. 1 spots are the most poles by any driver in the class. In fact, the only other drivers to record Pro Mod poles this year are Mike Castellana and Rickie Smith, and they've split the remaining four races. It was also the sixth time in eight Pro Mod races contested this season that the No. 1 qualifying time has held up as top speed of the meet.

Troy Coughlin fought consistent tire spin and shake during qualifying and ended up a surprise non-qualifier in Charlotte. Smith was the points leader going into the race, and Coughlin led a closely bunched group of racers who made up positions two, three, four, and five. By failing to qualify, Coughlin dropped from second to fourth in the points, but it could have been a lot worse. Two of the top four drivers in the standings lost in the first round of eliminations, which limited Coughlin's free fall down the ranks.

The Pro Mod car count continued to grow, and the field expanded from 24 to 28 racers to accommodate the increased interest. Twenty-seven different names appeared on the final qualifying sheet. The racers came from three countries, 16 different states, and three Canadian provinces. North Carolina, a longtime hotbed of Pro Mod action, led the list with five entries. New York was second with three racers, and Missouri was the only other state to furnish multiple entries with two. The U.S. racers came from (in alphabetical order) California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia. The Canadian racers were from the provinces of British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ontario, and Sweden provided the only international entry.



Troy Coughlin

It was good to see Eric Latino make another start with his '69 Camaro. Latino is from Port Perry, Ont., and I got to spend some time with him at Indy this year. He is in the exhaust-components business and is well-known for the high-performance catalytic converters that his Global Emissions System Inc. (GESI) company makes. Team Green is the name of Latino's racing operation, and it is more than just a name. His Camaro is green and black, and each time he updates his car, he gives it slightly more green paint and slightly less black paint. This is to signify the way his products are turning the world "green."

Engine carnage was severe at the Carlyle Tools NHRA Carolina Nationals presented by NAPA Auto Parts with Rowe (split engine block), Mike Janis (broken connecting rod), and Pete Farber (dropped valve) having noteworthy engine failures. In fact, Farber went so far as to say, "You really have to lean on the supercharged engines to try to keep up with the nitrous entries."

Farber was one driver who experienced both good and bad luck from those engine failures. In the semifinal round, he defeated Janis, whose engine broke a connecting rod at around the 1,000-foot mark. Farber was able to surge ahead at the finish line and take a narrow 5.981 to 6.089 win. In the final round, it was Farber who had the misfortune when he dropped a valve 3.2 seconds into his run and slowed to a 6.259. It was his only six-second run of the day; he had recorded elapsed times of 5.944, 5.987, and 5.988 in the first three rounds.

Event winner Von Smith was the recipient of Farber's bad fortune in the final round. Smith opened the season with a win in Gainesville and now has earned his second NHRA Wally of the year. It was also Smith's fifth win in five final-round appearances. His five wins in only 19 NHRA starts gives him a very respectable 26.3 percent winning percentage on the NHRA tour. The win also vaulted him into third place in the standings, only one point behind second-place Janis.



Rickie Smith