

YELLO

NHRA

NATIONAL DRAGSTER

ISSUE 10 ★ VOLUME 57 ★ MAY 20, 2016 ★ www.NHRA.com



SISTER ACT

BRITTANY WINS IN CHARLOTTE, COURTNEY IN HOUSTON; BOTH LEAD THE POINTS
COMPLETE COVERAGE INSIDE

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

Last year, NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series racers had "The Session" in Bristol, where atmospheric conditions and time of day combined to reward nearly every racer with a best, or near-best, qualifying run. Earlier this year, those same racers had "The Round" in Gainesville, where similar conditions once again rewarded nearly every racer with an ever-quickening low elapsed time of the first round.

It can now be said that those same drivers have turned a hat trick because at this year's NHRA SpringNationals in Houston, they experienced "The Race." From Friday's opening qualifying round to the very last pair in eliminations on Sunday night, it was a Pro Mod spectacle the likes of which had never been seen before.

Jim Whiteley earned his first Pro Mod Wally in his first Pro Mod final round, but to leave it at just that would be a gross understatement. His race weekend didn't look too promising after qualifying was completed because his 5.957 elapsed time left him 18th on the qualifying sheet and two spots short of making the field, but a couple of qualifying crashes moved him in, and he made the most of his second opportunity.

After upsetting Pete Farber in the opening round of eliminations, Whiteley recorded



Khalid alBalooshi

the quickest reaction time in each of the next three rounds. His .023 light in the final was actually his quickest of the day, but once again it looked like the clock had struck midnight for him when he lost traction and had to abort his run. However, just a nanosecond or two later, final-round opponent Rickie Smith also lost traction and ended up crossing into Whiteley's lane and hitting the wall on that side. The centerline violation made Whiteley the winner despite the fact that his '69 Chevelle had stopped near half-track and never made it to the finish line.

Smith wasn't the only wall-banger in Houston. Both Jonathan Gray and Sidnei Frigo had a close encounter of the worst kind during qualifying with Frigo's being the more brutal of the two. Nonetheless, Frigo was back at the track on Sunday with only a broken arm to show for his wild ride.

Shane Molinari and Dan Stevenson hit the wall in

Gainesville, and both bounced back quickly to be on hand in Houston. Molinari drove his freshly repaired '67 Firebird, and Stevenson showed up with a whole new piece of rolling stock. After riding out a nitrous fire at the Gatornationals, Stevenson decided to go a different route by purchasing the turbo-powered, late-model Camaro that Smith had constructed but never ran in open competition. Molinari's 5.936-second run was good enough to qualify him into the field, but Stevenson's best of 5.982 didn't make the cut.

After being MIA from NHRA competition since last year, Khalid alBalooshi showed up in Houston with a nitrous-boosted '69 Camaro and help from Smith. alBalooshi qualified with an impressive 5.870 to end up in the top half of the starting field. After defeating Danny Rowe in the opening stanza, he fell to Troy Coughlin Sr. in the second round despite recording a quicker elapsed time.

Von Smith rebounded quite nicely from his DNQ in Gainesville. His 5.802 qualifying run in Houston put him solidly in the field. His No. 3 starting position once again signaled that the three power adders in the class remain amazingly equal with a nitrous, turbo, and blown car holding down the top-three spots on the final qualifying sheet. Smith actually led a blower brigade as supercharged cars also qualified 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 15th, and 16th. It should also be noted that it was a blower car that won the race.



Dan Stevenson

PRO MOD

- Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('15 Camaro) **5.779, 250.46**
- Troy Coughlin Sr., Columbus, Ohio ('15 Corvette) **5.798, 255.92**
- Von Smith, Oak Ridge, Tenn. ('16 Corvette) **5.802, 249.12**
- Sidnei Frigo, Ball Ground, Ga. ('15 Corvette) **5.817, 252.52**
- Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('15 Corvette) **5.861, 246.48**
- Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('14 Camaro) **5.868, 257.63**
- Khalid alBalooshi, Doha, Qatar ('69 Camaro) **5.870, 247.16**
- Michael Biehle, North Vernon, Ind. ('67 Mustang) **5.880, 252.33**
- Mike Castellana, Muttontown, N.Y. ('15 Corvette) **5.904, 245.63**
- Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('15 Corvette) **5.914, 246.26**
- Pete Farber, Baldwinville, Mass. ('69 Daytona) **5.919, 245.58**
- Steve Matussek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) **5.928, 247.20**
- Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('13 Camaro) **5.930, 243.59**
- Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('67 Firebird) **5.936, 250.74**
- Doug Winters, Pleasant Garden, N.C. ('69 Chevelle) **5.938, 237.50**
- Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) **5.941, 245.99**

ALTERNATES: Bill Glidden - 5.955, 241.71; Jim Whiteley - 5.957, 240.68; Gerry Capano - 5.972, 237.50; Dan Stevenson - 5.982, 250.13; Robert Patrick Jr. - 5.983, 241.63; Jeff Naiser - 5.986, 243.55; Kevin Fiscus - 5.995, 243.72; Jim Bell - 6.006, 234.61; Clint Satterfield - 6.034, 246.62; Kenny Lang - 6.050, 241.37; Ruben Tetsoshevili - 6.105, 240.85; Chip King - 7.402, 133.92; Mike Knowles - 8.909, 109.55.

PRO MOD CHAMPION

JIM WHITELEY

5.837-249.16 R. SMITH (.229)	5.823-249.49 R. SMITH (.082)	5.835-252.76 COUGHLIN (.041)	5.917-254.28 COUGHLIN (.049)
BROKE S. WHITELEY (2.827)	5.776-250.00 R. SMITH (.078)	5.934-249.53 COUGHLIN (.044)	6.465-239.65 NAISER (.063)
5.975-250.04 BIEHLE (.041)	5.893-251.53 BIEHLE (.028)	5.821-248.48 ALBALOOSHI (.087)	5.858-247.25 ALBALOOSHI (.065)
6.053-246.03 CASTELLANA (.046)	DISQ.-C/LINE R. SMITH (.098)	NO TIME J. WHITELEY (.023)	5.959-243.72 ROWE (.042)
10.171-88.82 GLIDDEN (.048)	6.015-237.17 GLIDDEN (.029)	5.964-248.80 MOLINARI (.170)	12.960-65.49 V. SMITH (.049)
5.937-245.81 (FOUL) JANIS (-.011)	6.532-168.41 RAHAIM (.045)	5.924-241.02 J. WHITELEY (.031)	7.762-135.33 MOLINARI (.072)
5.925-246.26 RAHAIM (.077)	5.901-243.46 RAHAIM (.061)	5.923-245.14 J. WHITELEY (.026)	6.022-238.60 J. WHITELEY (.044)
5.953-245.72 MATUSEK (.052)			5.952-244.96 FARBER (.122)

LOW E.T.: 5.776 - R. SMITH
TOP SPEED: 257.63 - GRAY