



NATIONAL DRAGSTER[®]

ISSUE 14 ★ VOLUME 57 ★ JULY 15, 2016 ★ www.NHRA.com



CHARGED UP!

BACK-TO-BACK WINS
FUEL LANGDON'S
RESURGENCE

TOUGH TEXAN

WHEN IT COMES TO PAYING DUES, PRO STOCK'S CHRIS MCGAHA IS FREE AND CLEAR

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

With the completion of the NHRA Thunder Valley Nationals, the 2016 NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series reached its halfway point. Looking back over the first half of the year, it can be fairly said that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Rickie Smith, the 2013 and 2014 champion, leads the points, and Troy Coughlin Sr., the 2012 and 2015 champion, is in second place.

However, behind that traditionally strong pair rages a furious battle with positions three, four, and five separated by a mere 14 points. Steve Matussek is the best of the rest in third place with Bob Rahaim, last year's Gatornationals winner, just 11 points behind. The surprise of the top five is Indiana's Michael Biehle. After finishing 32nd in 2015, Biehle is holding down a strong fifth position this year, just three points behind Rahaim.

Unlike last year, the series has already had a repeat winner with Smith picking up two wins in the first five races. He also has one runner-up to go with his two wins and has been the dominant racer so far this season. The other winners to date this year are Jim Whiteley, Coughlin, and Mike Castellana.

Bill Glidden was a surprise nonqualifier in Bristol after going all the way to the final round the



Doug Winters

previous week in Englishtown. No doubt that was a fluke for the normally strong Precision Turbo team, and I expect them to bounce back quickly.

It was good to see Dan Stevenson qualify a strong 11th after nonqualifying efforts of 27th, 20th, 23rd, and 24th so far this season. He switched to a turbo-powered entry after Gainesville, where he suffered a serious fire in his nitrous-assisted Camaro. Stevenson's race day in Bristol ended early with a first-round loss, but hopefully it was a

sign of better things to come for the Illinois racer.

After just missing the field in Englishtown, Doug Winters bounced back to qualify in the 14th position. His best qualifying position this season was No. 8 in Atlanta, where he went to the second round. Despite losing in the first round of eliminations in Bristol, Winters moved into the top 15 in points, and his car is turning into a very consistent performer.

Another team that is on the move up is Gerry Capano's crew

of Greenville, Del. Capano has qualified for the last three races after starting the season with two straight DNQs. The addition of noted tuner Howard Moon was a good move by the team, and recent results show that.

By comparison, a team that is off to a quiet start in 2016 is Mike Janis' group, which took last season's points chase to the very last day only to finish second by just 14 points. This year, Janis has four first-round losses and one DNQ to show for the first half of his season. I'm looking for the normally high-flying team to turn its season around soon.

Khalid alBalooshi joined the 2016 tour in Houston in a team car for Smith and quickly rattled off three straight strong finishes in Houston, Atlanta, and Englishtown, but he was a surprise nonqualifier in Bristol, where his best elapsed time of 6.049 left him 17th on the final qualifying sheet. Despite that small setback, alBalooshi remained in the top 10, in the 8th position.

Coming up in quick succession is the third of three straight racing weekends for NHRA Pro Mod racers. After visiting Summit Racing Equipment Motorsports Park next, the tour will then take a two-month summer break before returning to action at the fabled Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals over Labor Day weekend.



Dan Stevenson

PRO MOD

- Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('15 Corvette) . . . 5.796, 246.48
- Troy Coughlin Sr., Delaware, Ohio ('15 Corvette) . . . 5.831, 251.72
- Mike Castellana, Muttontown, N.Y. ('15 Corvette) . . . 5.886, 244.52
- Michael Biehle, North Vernon, Ind. ('67 Mustang) . . . 5.890, 251.06
- Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('15 Camaro) . . . 5.893, 245.36
- Chip King, Semora, N.C. ('69 Daytona) . . . 5.899, 241.80
- Steve Matussek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) . . . 5.908, 244.43
- Von Smith, Kingston, Tenn. ('16 Corvette) . . . 5.917, 244.25
- Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('13 Camaro) . . . 5.937, 241.24
- Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('15 Corvette) . . . 5.948, 244.12
- Dan Stevenson, Bolingbrook, Ill. ('16 Camaro) . . . 5.980, 252.05
- Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('69 Chevelle) . . . 5.993, 241.45
- Mike Knowles, Grand Junction, Colo. ('67 Mustang) . . . 6.018, 237.59
- Doug Winters, Pleasant Garden, N.C. ('69 Chevelle) . . . 6.019, 239.19
- Gerry Capano, Greenville, Del. ('63 Corvette) . . . 6.030, 237.25
- Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) . . . 6.047, 239.82

ALTERNATES: Khalid alBalooshi - 6.049, 241.07; Pete Farber - 6.070, 239.65; Jim Bell - 6.072, 223.43; Clint Satterfield - 6.103, 241.37; Kenny Lang - 6.128, 238.51; Bill Glidden - 6.515, 177.63; Chuck Little - 7.247, 146.30.

PRO MOD CHAMPION MIKE CASTELLANA

5.926-243.33 RAHAIM (.070)	5.896-245.85 RAHAIM (.025)	5.867-244.78 COUGHLIN (.053)	5.990-218.02 COUGHLIN (.084)
10.549-103.74 S. WHITELEY (.077)	5.907-244.38 RAHAIM (.067)	8.397-110.76 COUGHLIN (.030)	6.052-232.91 CAPANO (.064)
5.922-243.50 V. SMITH (.087)	5.982-244.43 V. SMITH (.087)	NO TIME CASTELLANA (.046)	9.471-93.51 MATUSEK (.065)
5.992-243.72 JANIS (.067)	DISQ.-C/LINE RAHAIM (.098)	NO TIME CASTELLANA (.046)	5.942-244.83 (FOUL) ROWE (-.012)
5.942-250.83 BIEHLE (.000)	5.897-253.04 BIEHLE (.026)	5.966-243.99 CASTELLANA (.059)	5.947-243.77 CASTELLANA (.057)
8.813-106.70 KNOWLES (.107)	5.938-251.81 BIEHLE (.060)	5.953-243.41 CASTELLANA (.039)	6.022-240.64 WINTERS (.069)
5.987-244.60 R. SMITH (.073)	5.964-244.92 R. SMITH (.069)	5.953-243.41 KING (.090)	13.832-NSR KING (.114)
13.286-96.97 J. WHITELEY (.122)			DISQ.-C/LINE STEVENSON (-.063)

LOW E.T.: 5.796 - RAHAIM
TOP SPEED: 253.04 - BIEHLE