GOLDEN GATOR

Schumacher's fifth victory
makes him winningest
Gatornationals Top
Fuel driver

SAM TECH FACTORY STOCK SHOWDOWN
Barton's Camaro continues to dominate factory wars

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

A newcomer and a veteran were the main topics of discussion following the 2017 Amalie Motor Oil NRHA Gatornationals. Although neither of them won the race, or even went to the final round, both of them left an impression that won't soon be forgotten.

The newcomer was Georgia's **Stevie "Fast" Jackson**. Many wondered how Jackson, a two-time champion and superstar in other series, would fare in his big-show debut, but they certainly didn't have to wait very long. In Friday's very first NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series qualifying session, Jackson went 5.842 seconds, which was good enough to place him sixth on the provisional qualifying sheet. However, it was Friday's second qualifying session that told the NHRA world that Jackson was for real. A 5.781 propelled him straight to the top of the qualifying sheet, where he remained for the balance of qualifying.

When Jackson left for Gainesville, he had told his guys that if he qualified for the field and lost in the first round that it would be a success in his eyes. After two days of testing at a nearby track, he raised his sights to qualifying in the top half of the field to make the event a success. The clock struck midnight for Jackson in the first round of eliminations when he slowed and

Stevie Jackson

was defeated by No. 16 qualifier **Eric Latino**. Although he was out in the opening round, no one will soon forget Jackson's debut.

Compared to Jackson, veteran Latino was having the opposite type of weekend. His 15.235 e.t. in the first round of qualifying placed him 25th (of 27) on the initial qualifying sheet, and a 7.760-second run only moved him up to the 24th position after the second round of qualifying. A 5.855 run in the final qualifying session allowed Latino to sneak into the field in the 16th and final position. It also earned him a first-round match with No. 1 qualifier Jackson. For the record, Latino was driving a new-to-him '68 Camaro that was once owned by Mike Knowles and had come to him via Jim Whiteley.

In that first-round pairing, Latino gave a hint of what was to come with a 5.779, the quickest run of the event, and a booming top speed of 256.45

mph. However, it was his second-round time that left everyone gasping; Latino set the new Pro Mod elapsed time record with a 5.727 run. Unfortunately for him, that run was coupled with a .089-second reaction time, which allowed Troy Coughlin Sr.'s .008 light and 5.759 to beat him. Coughlin's 5.759 was the second-quickest Pro Mod run of the event.

Last year, **Sidnei Frigo** crashed at the NHRA SpringNationals, and it looked like a possible repeat of that

Eric Latino

incident was in the making during the third round of Pro Mod qualifying in Gainesville. Running in the left lane and paired with Jackson, Frigo got loose near the finish line and made an immediate right turn. He crossed into Jackson's lane and ended up following him through the shutdown area. No doubt Frigo's time at a driving school paid off greatly because he was able to avoid another incident.

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This column marks the debut of the "Can You Name?" game. In each column, we'll pose a question with the answer to be provided in the next column. For our very first game, can you name Pro Mod's biggest fan? She works behind the scenes to continuously promote Pro Mod. Here's a hint: Although she doesn't run in Pro Mod, she is doing pretty good this year in her regular eliminator. I'll share the surprising answer in my next column from Houston. NHRA

PRO MOD

1. Stevie Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro) 5.781, 251.58
2. Sidnei Frigo, Sao Paulo, Brazil ('16 Corvette) 5.795, 256.70
3. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('17 Camaro) 5.798, 253.47
4. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('16 Camaro) 5.803, 248.25
5. Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) . . . 5.805, 251.58
6. Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('15 Corvette) 5.815, 252.14
7. Khalid alBalooshi, Ajman, United Arab Emirates ('17 Camaro) 5.820, 251.16
8. Steve Matusek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) 5.821, 253.85
9. Troy Coughlin Sr., Delaware, Ohio ('15 Corvette) 5.828, 253.95
10. Kevin Rivenbark, Wallace, N.C. ('15 Corvette) 5.836, 246.17
11. Shannon Jenkins, Tuscaloosa, Ala. ('16 Mustang) . . . 5.838, 249.35
12. Todd Tutterow, Yadkinville, N.C. ('69 Camaro) 5.845, 248.75
13. Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('69 Chevelle) . . . 5.848, 242.63
14. Michael Biehle, North Vernon, Ind. ('67 Mustang) . . . 5.854, 251.81
15. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) 5.855, 250.64
16. Eric Latino, Port Perry, Ont. ('69 Camaro) 5.855, 235.76

ALTERNATES: Chip King - 5.856, 248.89; Dan Stevenson - 5.881, 251.49; Kevin Fiscus - 5.882, 248.25; Bob Rahaim - 5.888, 246.62; Chuck Little - 5.939, 236.55; Kenny Lang - 5.953, 243.63; Doug Winters - 5.985, 243.50; Clint Satterfield - 6.026, 245.05; Ruben Tetsoshvili - 6.203, 243.33; Pete Farber - 6.313, 170.13; Shane Molinari - 6.625, 166.95.

PRO MOD CHAMPION
STEVEN WHITELEY

6.664-146.30 JACKSON (.149)	5.727-256.36 LATINO (.089)			5.850-250.27 CASTELLANA (.016)	5.786-256.36 FRIGO (.215)
5.779-256.45 LATINO (.099)		6.213-197.16 COUGHLIN (.012)			5.897-249.72 CASTELLANA (.082)
5.825-252.38 MATUSEK (.084)	5.758-255.10 COUGHLIN (.008)		15.718-51.88 CASTELLANA (.032)	7.707-124.45 RIVENBARK (.043)	5.837-247.38 ALBALOOSHI (.060)
5.807-252.24 COUGHLIN (.039)		5.791-253.52 S. WHITELEY (.052)	10.192-87.94 CASTELLANA (.034)		5.857-245.76 RIVENBARK (.033)
5.901-247.16 JANIS (.062)	DISQ.-C/LINE JANIS (.041)			8.626-110.00 BIEHLE (.063)	7.948-121.62 SMITH (.109)
5.903-248.75 J. WHITELEY (.083)		5.826-251.02 S. WHITELEY (.059)	5.825-251.53 (FOUL) ROWE (-.012)		5.843-253.90 BIEHLE (.043)
5.799-252.19 S. WHITELEY (.076)	5.806-251.30 S. WHITELEY (.065)			5.877-251.44 ROWE (.041)	5.840-246.57 ROWE (.047)
5.865-247.16 TUTTEROW (.066)					7.360-135.88 JENKINS (.115)

LOW E.T.: 5.727 - LATINO
TOP SPEED: 256.70 - FRIGO