



NATIONAL DRAGSTER[®]

ISSUE 11 ★ VOLUME 58 ★ JUNE 2, 2017 ★ www.NHRA.com

STEVE-O STRIKES AGAIN

TORRENCE JUMPS BACK INTO TITLE FIGHT WITH SECOND STRAIGHT WIN

MAG TOOTS

CAPCO

COMPLETE ATLANTA COVERAGE

Capps wins third straight, Torrence and Butner score seconds as NHRA tour marches through Georgia

JONNIE LINDBERG

Super Swede is conquering America one class at a time

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

One of the most amazing things to me about the NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series is the continued parity of the three different power adders that are allowed in the class. At the Lucas Oil NHRA Southern Nationals in Atlanta, there were two supercharged, two turbocharged, and two nitrous-assisted cars in the top-six qualifiers. This stunning closeness creates a drama that is drawing new fans to the eliminator at every race.

Equally amazing is the closeness of the competition. In the first round of eliminations, Larry Morgan defeated Steve Matussek on a holeshot, 5.860 to 5.855, and Stevie "Fast" Jackson defeated Shane Molinari, 5.808 to 5.808, with Jackson's .028-second light proving to be the difference over Molinari's .051 reaction time.

In the final round, Mike Castellana turned the tables on Jackson when Castellana's .025 reaction time and 5.776-second pass were good enough to hold off Jackson's .051 light and quicker 5.772-second elapsed time. The win was Castellana's second in a row, thrusting him even more firmly into the Pro Mod points lead.

Speaking of Jackson, he came into the series this year with a very strong résumé from



Von Smith

his past drag racing exploits. As if to put an exclamation point on his arrival, Jackson qualified No. 1 in his NHRA Pro Mod debut in Gainesville, which was also his first time racing on the full quarter-mile. After an uncharacteristic DNQ in Houston, Jackson rebounded quickly by making the field in Charlotte and Atlanta, where he reached the final round. After his first four events, Jackson has qualified three times and has one runner-up finish to his credit. No doubt the reputation that preceded him was not overstated.

Von Smith showed up at the last race as the new driver of the Jim Bell Camaro. After failing to qualify at his first event, Smith proved that Bell's faith in him was well-deserved when he jumped from 27th in Charlotte to 15th on the final qualifying sheet in Atlanta. Despite a first-round loss, this team continues to be one to watch in 2017.

Another driver to keep an eye

on this year is Harry Hruska. After missing the field at his first two races this season, Hruska qualified No. 3 in Atlanta and went two rounds, which was very impressive for someone that is driving his own car for the first time after years of hiring the best talent available for his driver's seat.

Someone that seems to be trending in the opposite direction is Mike Janis. After a very strong start to his 2017 season with qualifying positions of fourth and sixth in Gainesville and Houston, respectively, Janis has DNQ'd at his last two events. Soft-spoken

Shannon Jenkins finds himself in a similar situation. Jenkins qualified 11th and 15th to start the year but has followed that up with back-to-back DNQs. You can bet these proven racers will work hard to turn their seasons around.

It was good to see Bob Rahaim back behind the wheel in Atlanta. Rahaim was one-half of a rare double disqualification in Houston after his Corvette hit the guardwall of his lane. After missing just one event, Rahaim was back in action with his quickly repaired C7 racer. A 14th qualifying spot and a round-one exit were his rewards for the hasty repairs. Rahaim hopes to debut an all-new race car in the not-too-distant future.

In a previous issue, I posed the question: Who is Pro Mod's biggest fan? The surprising answer is Top Fuel driver Leah Pritchett. For this race, I have another question with an equally surprising answer: Who is helping Pro Mod drivers in the fields of car control and aerodynamics?



Mike Janis

PRO MOD

1. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) **5.717, 251.81**
2. Todd Tutterow, Yadkinville, N.C. ('69 Camaro) **5.786, 248.29**
3. Harry Hruska, Hebron, Ind. ('14 Camaro) **5.796, 253.42**
4. Khalid alBalooshi, Ajman, United Arab Emirates ('17 Camaro) **5.796, 248.89**
5. Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('17 Camaro) **5.796, 248.20**
6. Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('68 Firebird) **5.803, 257.48**
7. Steve Matussek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) **5.810, 251.02**
8. Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('15 Corvette) **5.812, 249.30**
9. Sidnei Frigo, Sao Paulo, Brazil ('16 Corvette) **5.813, 254.04**
10. Larry Morgan, Newark, Ohio ('17 Camaro) **5.819, 252.43**
11. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro) **5.825, 245.40**
12. Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) **5.826, 249.53**
13. Doug Winters, Pleasant Garden, N.C. ('69 Chevelle) **5.840, 244.60**
14. Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('15 Corvette) **5.855, 238.64**
15. Von Smith, Kingston, Tenn. ('69 Camaro) **5.881, 246.30**
16. Kevin Rivenbark, Wallace, N.C. ('15 Corvette) **5.881, 242.54**

ALTERNATES: Eric Latino - 5.891, 249.21; Chuck Little - 5.894, 244.78; Mike Janis - 5.903, 245.00; Pete Farber - 5.907, 251.44; Michael Biehle - 5.920, 252.47; Jim Whiteley - 5.965, 244.38; Clint Satterfield - 6.037, 248.02; Troy Coughlin - 6.101, 248.07; Ruben Tetsoshvili - 6.206, 232.19; Mike Knowles - 6.406, 223.84; Kevin Fiscus - 8.039, 107.80; Shannon Jenkins - 14.267, 86.81.

