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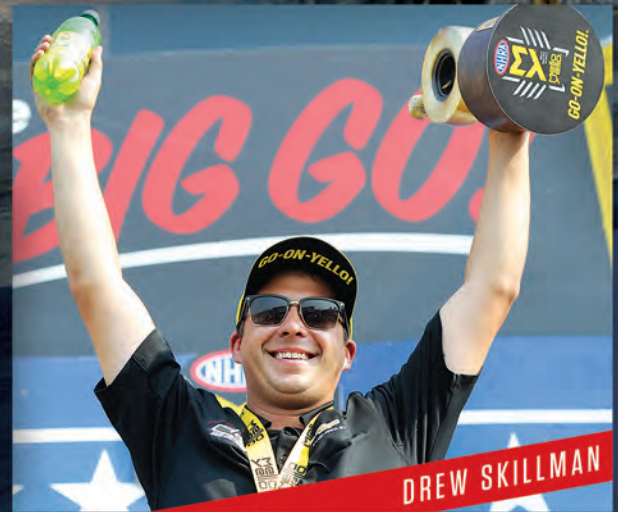
STEVE TORRENCE

THE BIG GO!

Complete coverage of the CHEVROLET PERFORMANCE U.S. NATIONALS



J.R. TODD



DREW SKILLMAN



EDDIE KRAWIEC

ALSO INSIDE: Hits and misses of the 2017 regular season

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

ndy 2017 was the best of times for some of the NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series racers and the worst of times for others. Chief among the racers who had a positive result was Brazilian **Sidnei Frigo**. He won his first-ever NHRA Pro Mod event at the biggest race on the NHRA calendar, the Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals. Very ably tuned by Brandon Stroud and with Frigo's son in attendance, Frigo was able to outdistance fellow Corvette C7 driver Troy Coughlin Sr. in the final.

While **Coughlin** had to settle for the runner-up — his third of this season — he was a big winner in another way. His final-round finish combined with the surprising first-round exit of Mike Castellana thrust Coughlin back into the points chase. With three races remaining this season, no other Pro Mod racer besides Castellana or Coughlin have a mathematical chance to become the 2017 Pro Mod points champion.

Coughlin also walked away with the top speed of the meet, recording a 258.76-mph pass. This was Coughlin's second top speed in a row and second of the year. Shane Molinari leads all NHRA Pro Mod competitors with five top speeds at the first nine events of 2017. Every 2017 top speed has been captured by a turbocharged entry. The



Billy Glidden

supercharged entries had their maximum boost cut back early in the season, and they seem to have quite a bit of parity with the nitrous-assisted cars, but both are a step back from the turbo cars in power output.

Among those disappointed in Indy was hometown boy **Billy Glidden**. Glidden, who was making his first NHRA start of the year after crashing his freshly painted Ford Mustang during preseason testing, ended up 22nd on the final qualifying sheet with a 6.038-second e.t. Glidden was driving his new-to-him '68 Camaro that he had acquired from Maryland's Jim Halsey.

Someone who came a long way only to leave empty-handed was California's **Michael Bowman**. Bowman qualified third for this event last year but could only muster a lowly No. 21 qualifying spot this year, one ahead of Glidden. Despite missing out on Indy eliminations, Bowman has had a great year in other respects; he captured the \$100,000 purse that was

offered at an independent Pro Mod event between Norwalk and Indy.

Florida's **Rick Hord Sr.** celebrated his 51st year in motorsports by debuting his new Maximum Effort IV Pro Mod. With son Rick Hord Jr. driving, the new Corvette recorded a best elapsed time of 6.223 seconds, which left him 23rd and well out of the field. Rick Sr. has been a longtime NHRA winner and record holder. Nothing less is expected from his new car once he gets it sorted out.

The last time we saw **Steve Matusek** he was up against the wall in Norwalk. Matusek used

the Pro Mod summer break to his benefit as he was back in Indy with his newly repaired '68 Camaro. The car had received a new paint job since Norwalk and features an even meaner, bionic caricature of crew chief Jimmy Rector that is known as "Little Jimmy." Matusek qualified 11th in his return to NHRA competition but was defeated by Rickie Smith in the first round. Matusek actually recorded a better elapsed time with a 5.836, but that was not enough to overcome Smith's quicker-leaving 5.847-second e.t.

One car that needs to be recognized is the 10-day wonder of Shannon Jenkins and **Richie Stevens Jr.** Jenkins and Stevens were able to assemble a complete Camaro in 10 days. With Stevens driving, it recorded an astounding 5.805-second elapsed time in the first qualifying session. Ultimately, that 5.805 was good for ninth on the final qualifying sheet. Stevens went to the semifinals, where he was defeated by eventual event winner Frigo.



Rick Hord Jr.

PRO MOD

1. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) **5.709, 252.52**
2. Troy Coughlin Sr., Delaware, Ohio ('15 Corvette). **5.743, 258.76**
3. Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('68 Firebird) **5.750, 257.63**
4. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro). **5.779, 249.63**
5. Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) **5.785, 249.86**
6. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('17 Camaro) **5.794, 251.34**
7. Harry Hruska, Hebron, Ind. ('14 Camaro) **5.795, 253.37**
8. Khalid alBalooshi, Dubai, United Arab Emirates ('17 Camaro) **5.805, 249.67**
9. Richie Stevens Jr., New Orleans, La. ('15 Camaro) **5.805, 247.79**
10. Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('17 Camaro) **5.807, 249.86**
11. Steve Matusek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) **5.815, 249.58**
12. Shannon Jenkins, Tuscaloosa, Ala. ('16 Mustang) **5.820, 246.12**
13. Sidnei Frigo, Sao Paulo, Brazil ('16 Corvette) **5.829, 253.04**
14. Dan Stevenson, Bolingbrook, Ill. ('16 Camaro) **5.836, 254.86**
15. Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('69 Camaro) **5.841, 249.67**
16. Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('16 Corvette) **5.846, 247.38**

ALTERNATES: Michael Biehle - 5.870, 253.23; Mike Janis - 5.875, 244.56; Chuck Little - 5.876, 243.85; Doug Winters - 5.880, 243.72; Michael Bowman - 5.882, 258.37; Bill Glidden - 6.038, 225.75; Rick Hord Jr. - 6.223, 220.15; Ruben Tetsosvilli - 6.357, 220.98; Clint Satterfield - 6.503, 212.29; Bob Rahaim - 6.692, 159.59.

