



NATIONAL DRAGSTER[®]

ISSUE 20 ★ VOLUME 58 ★ OCTOBER 6, 2017
WWW.NHRA.COM



COUNTDOWN SHAKE-UP

*KALITTA'S FIRST SEASON WIN GIVES HIM TOP FUEL POINTS LEAD;
VICTORIES BY HIGHT, GRAY, KRAWIEC ALSO EARN TOP POSITIONS*

NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

For the second time this season, the racers in the NHRA J&A Service Pro Mod Drag Racing Series traveled to Charlotte for a race in the heart of the spiritual home of all Pro Mod racing. zMAX Dragway is the only track that the NHRA Pro Mod competitors visit twice each year, and this time, they, along with everyone else, did it the conventional way with two-wide drag racing.

The driver of the event has to be New Hampshire's **Chuck Little**. After qualifying for only his second NHRA race this season, Little went all the way to the final four of eliminations. He began his race day with an otherworldly .009-second reaction time to upset a quicker Rickie Smith, and he got past Jim Whiteley in round two before falling to eventual event winner Jonathan Gray in the semifinals.

Little's crew is one of the smallest in the Pro Mod pits and includes only Dan Page, who was also driving his own car in competition at the NHRA Carolina Nationals, and Western Canada's Mike Waterson.

Interestingly, Little's unbelievable .009 reaction time was only tied for the third-best reaction time of the event. Charlotte winner **Gray** also recorded a .009-second reaction time to go along with his stellar .007 and .002 reaction times. Needless to say, Gray's



Mike Janis

.002-second light was the best reaction time of the event for the Pro Mod contingent.

Washington's **Shane Molinari** continued his torrid pace when he recorded both low e.t. and top speed of the event for the Pro Mod class. It was his sixth top speed in 10 events this season, and it was also the second time that he led in both categories. Unfortunately for Molinari, he bowed out in the first round to Pete Farber on a holeshot.

After a season in which the turbocharged entries grabbed a lot of the Pro Mod headlines, they were relatively quiet in Charlotte. Only three of the seven turbo entries qualified, and they were all eliminated in round one. In fact, it was seven blown cars that advanced to the second round, along with the lone nitrous entry of Gray. By utilizing some fantastic driving, Gray was able to advance all the way to the final round and win his first J&A Service Pro Mod Wally ever.

For the second time in his Pro Mod career, **Whiteley** found himself in the starting field due to breakage by other drivers after qualifying only 18th. This time, however, he wasn't quite as fortunate as last year when he won the event in Houston. Whiteley was the winner in the first round when Sidnei Frigo crossed the centerline, but his day ended in round two, where he fell to Little.

A resurgent **Mike Janis** had his best outing of the year when he advanced to the semifinals. After a DNQ in

Indy, Janis bounced back to qualify fifth in Charlotte, his second-highest qualifying spot this season. In eliminations, he beat Troy Coughlin Sr. in the first round and Danny Rowe in the second round before losing to "Stevie Fast" Jackson in the semi's. His round-one victory over Coughlin included an impressive .011-second reaction time. Coughlin was no slouch at the Tree, either, recording a .020-second reaction time of his own.

Looking at a list of past winners for this event provides an interesting mix of current and former competitors in the class. Melanie Troxel won the first race here back in 2010, followed by Leah Pritchett in 2011 and 2012. Current Pro Mod competitor Von Smith won this event in 2013 and was followed by Coughlin and Rowe in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Bob Rahaim was the winner last year.

Only 23 Pro Mod racers attempted to qualify for this year's NHRA Carolina Nationals,



Chuck Little

the lowest Pro Mod turnout of 2017. Steven Whiteley missed his first event of the year when he stayed home for the birth of a child, and several racers were affected by the recent storms.

PRO MOD

1. Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('68 Firebird) ... **5.778, 256.55**
2. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) ... **5.781, 252.10**
3. Sidnei Frigo, Sao Paulo, Brazil ('16 Corvette) ... **5.784, 254.95**
4. Eric Latino, Port Perry, Ont. ('69 Camaro) ... **5.792, 252.14**
5. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('16 Camaro) ... **5.815, 248.48**
6. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('17 Camaro) ... **5.830, 250.00**
7. Steve Matusek, Olathe, Kan. ('68 Camaro) ... **5.833, 249.72**
8. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro) ... **5.842, 247.88**
9. Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('14 Camaro) ... **5.846, 249.07**
10. Jonathan Gray, Artesia, N.M. ('17 Camaro) ... **5.848, 248.57**
11. Chuck Little, Atkinson, N.H. ('63 Corvette) ... **5.859, 243.59**
12. Troy Coughlin Sr., Delaware, Ohio ('15 Corvette) ... **5.861, 255.24**
13. Danny Rowe, Laguna Hills, Calif. ('16 Corvette) ... **5.863, 248.11**
14. Shannon Jenkins, Tuscaloosa, Ala. ('16 Mustang) ... **5.867, 247.79**
15. Khalid alBalooshi, Dubai, United Arab Emirates ('17 Camaro) ... **5.870, 249.07**
16. Pete Farber, Baldwinville, Mass. ('69 Daytona) ... **5.873, 247.25**

ALTERNATES: Dan Stevenson - 5.876, 252.80; Jim Whiteley - 5.878, 248.66; Michael Biehle - 5.884, 254.28; Chip King - 5.890, 244.16; Doug Winters - 6.231, 237.38; Harry Hruska - 6.268, 243.19; Clint Satterfield - 7.526, 209.33.

PRO MOD CHAMPION JONATHAN GRAY			
5.829-251.72 MOLINARI (.129)	5.867-247.57 FARBER (.105)	5.829-251.25 CASTELLANA (.042)	6.000-246.84 CASTELLANA (.083)
5.878-247.75 FARBER (.042)	5.828-246.57 JACKSON (.036)	5.825-250.27 GRAY (.002)	9.493-88.54 alBALOOSHI (.096)
5.833-247.84 JACKSON (.031)	5.824-248.07 JACKSON (.034)	5.824-249.81 GRAY (.009)	5.860-248.25 MATUSEK (.083)
9.260-118.35 RAHAIM (.072)	5.818-248.39 JACKSON (.018)	5.809-250.46 GRAY (.026)	5.869-248.71 GRAY (.007)
6.225-220.98 LATINO (.125)	5.922-245.09 ROWE (.070)	5.921-247.29 WHITELEY (.030)	DISQ.-C/LINE FRIGO (.062)
5.888-247.88 ROWE (.097)	10.089-87.05 JANIS (.075)	5.874-245.63 LITTLE (.052)	5.902-247.38 WHITELEY (.099)
5.879-247.66 JANIS (.011)	5.874-247.29 JANIS (.057)	5.876-245.99 LITTLE (.038)	5.840-249.53 SMITH (.090)
5.873-253.80 COUGHLIN (.020)			5.897-244.74 LITTLE (.009)

LOW E.T.: 5.778 - MOLINARI
TOP SPEED: 256.55 - MOLINARI