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# Notes From the Pro Mod Reporter's Notebook

Mike Knowles



by Jim Luikens

**T**roy Coughlin, driving a pink-hued Corvette, won the NHRA Toyota Nationals in Las Vegas. Coughlin's victory, his second of 2013, secured a solid runner-up finish in the 2013 NHRA Pro Mod Drag Racing Series standings. It also marked the milestone 100th event win by the Coughlin family in NHRA competition. Since 1990, John, Troy, Mike, Jeg Jr., and Troy Jr. have combined to win 100 events in no less than nine different eliminators.

Danny Rowe runner-upped to Coughlin. Surprisingly, this was Rowe's first final round of the season. His four No. 1 qualifying positions, four low e.t.s of the event (out of 10 races), and one top speed of the event showed just how strong his car was all year. The racing breaks certainly did not go his way this year, but he remained positive through thick and thin.

Sunday evening after the race, Rowe and his renowned tuner, Jimmy Rector, were the surprise recipients of the 2013 Steve Engel Big Man, Big Heart Award at the season-ending banquet. The annual award honors the Pro Mod competitor(s) who has/have done the most in the last 12 months to emulate the spirit of the late Steve Engel, a beloved former NHRA Pro Mod driver.

Todd Tutterow was the No. 1 qualifier in Las Vegas with his turbocharged '67 Ford Mustang. His 5.876 also held up for low e.t. of

the event, and his 250.69-mph top speed was the best of the meet. In the first round of eliminations, Tutterow was paired against Galot Motorsports teammate Kevin Rivenbark, whose 6.060 in his supercharged Corvette was good enough for the win after Tutterow lost traction and slowed to a 10.381.

For the record, turbo-powered cars recorded nine top speeds of the event this year with only Rowe's supercharged Camaro breaking the stranglehold.

Rickie Smith locked up the 2013 Pro Mod championship in Reading, and Coughlin's win was good enough to secure second place in the final standings. The rest of the top-10 points earners were, in order, Mike Castellana, Mike Janis, Von Smith, Rowe, Kenny Lang, Pete Farber, Chip King, and Mike Knowles. All told, 42 different competitors earned points during the 2013 season.

Speaking of Knowles, he had his 2014 entry on display in Las Vegas, and it is really something. It's a Mob-themed '67 Mustang that takes paint detailing and graphics to an entirely new level. Embedded in the Jeff Hoskins paint job are real \$100 bills along with numerous small touches that show the extensive amount of attention to detail that was taken to prepare this vehicle. The car was also shown on the Manufacturers Midway at Indy and received much acclaim there, too.

The NHRA Pro Mod season ended on a high note, and next year looks to be even stronger. Between existing drivers and confirmed new entries, there is a pool of more than 60 cars and drivers to support the series. The long-awaited Pro Mod television package is also close to being finalized. Preliminary reports look like there will be television coverage of all 10 events next year.

Finally, a little whimsy to close out this season. Several years ago, Stu Wotypka from Canada's ID Motorsport Design produced an illustration of what a Cadillac XLR might look like as a Pro Mod racer. While the real car was never constructed, this illustration has always been a favorite of mine. As such, it seems like a fine way to close out the 2013 Pro Mod coverage. Enjoy the off-season. **ND**

Cadillac XLR Pro Mod

