



# NATIONAL DRAGSTER<sup>®</sup>

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## GREATER NATIONALS

CRAMPTON, BECKMAN, GRAY,  
AND KRAWIEC COLLECT VICTORIES  
AT WILD GATOR NATIONALS



**HISTORY MAKER**  
Arana Jr. bashes through 200-mph  
Pro Stock Motorcycle barrier



# NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

The 2018 E3 Spark Plugs NHRA Pro Mod Drag Racing Series presented by J&A Service got off to a great start at the Amalie Motor Oil NHRA Gatornationals in Gainesville as a record 35 entries tried to qualify for the 16 starting spots. New for 2018 is that Pro Mod racers will get four rounds of qualifying at each race, as opposed to receiving four at only the Indianapolis event in the past and three at every other stop on the tour. They will also contest all four rounds of eliminations on Sunday except Indy, where the first round is run on Sunday, and the remaining three will run on Monday.

Also new for this season was the arrival of the converter cars. Only six conventional clutch cars were in attendance, and the other 29 cars used a torque converter coupled to a transfer device, such as a Bruno or Quick Drive, which was then hooked to a planetary transmission, such as a Lenco or B&J or a manual transmission like a Liberty.

The 35 entries consisted mostly of well-known NHRA cars and drivers, even if a few had been rarely seen in the past. Truly new to the NHRA Pro Mod Series, though, were **Jeremy Ray** and **Chad Green**.

Ray, from Lugoff, S.C., began bracket racing 14 years ago and has been Pro Mod racing since 2014. He finished fifth

Chad Green



in the 2017 PDRA points race. Ray's team is very much a family team, and he is one of the few drivers who serves as his own tuner as well. His '63 Corvette was built by TM Race Cars and is named the Carolina Kingpin, a throwback to the days of yore when race cars were identified by colorful nicknames.

Ray's long-standing goal had been to race in the NHRA Pro Mod Series, and he has done that for 2018. He qualified strong in Gainesville with a 5.798-second pass. His Corvette is a converter car that uses a Cameron converter from South Carolina with a Bruno drive

hooked up to a Liberty manual transmission. He got his 2018 season off to a great start by winning the Real Pro Mod Winter Warm-Up race in Orlando, Fla., back in February. However, Ray was not quite as lucky in Gainesville as he bowed out in the first round of eliminations. Look for him to run at all 12 events in the 2018 NHRA Pro Mod Series.

The other newcomer was Midland, Texas, native Green. He qualified seventh with a 5.793-second pass and then started his race day strong with a holeshot victory over Khalid alBalooshi. That was followed by a surprise second-round upset of Stevie "Fast" Jackson, 5.783 to 5.795. However, things took quite a turn for Green in the semifinals when he crossed the centerline at midtrack and hit the left-side guardwall

hard before ricocheting back into his own lane and nearly hitting the right-side guardwall. There's no word yet on his future plans, but Green's '17 Corvette was well-damaged from the firewall forward.

It was good to see **Mike Janis** back in a final round, despite falling to Rickie Smith. Winless since 2015, it's always nice to see a good team going rounds and getting back to their winning ways.

**Dan Stevenson** continued the hot roll that he started late last season, and his car continues to run well as he qualified with a best elapsed time of 5.801 seconds, which was good for the No. 11 spot. Stevenson ran a very respectable 5.830 in the first round only to be defeated by eventual event runner-up Janis. Stevenson also debuted his new '18 COPO Camaro that runs in the School of Automotive Machinists & Technology NHRA Factory Stock Showdown. New-car blues kept him to a best of 29th on the final qualifying sheet.

As an interesting aside, Stevenson had good company at the bottom of the NHRA Factory Stock Showdown qualifying sheet as longtime NHRA Pro Stock standout Allen Johnson debuted his Challenger Drag Pak, finishing in the No. 30 position. It must have been hastily prepared because there was no lettering on it, not even his name.



Jeremy Ray

## PRO MOD

1. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.750, 253.56**
2. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.754, 250.60**
3. Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('68 Firebird) . . . . . **5.771, 256.16**
4. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.776, 250.64**
5. Steven Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('14 CTS-V) . . . . . **5.787, 253.47**
6. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('16 Camaro) . . . . . **5.787, 248.84**
7. Chad Green, Midland, Texas ('17 Corvette) . . . . . **5.793, 248.93**
8. Todd Tutterow, Yadkinville, N.C. ('68 Camaro) . . . . . **5.795, 249.72**
9. Jeremy Ray, Lugoff, S.C. ('63 Corvette) . . . . . **5.798, 247.66**
10. Khalid alBalooshi, Ajman, United Arab Emirates ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.800, 250.92**
11. Dan Stevenson, Bolingbrook, Ill. ('16 Camaro) . . . . . **5.801, 255.34**
12. Jim Whiteley, Grand Junction, Colo. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.801, 248.11**
13. Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.823, 246.30**
14. Doug Winters, Pleasant Garden, N.C. ('69 Chevelle) . . . . . **5.829, 246.75**
15. Jose Gonzalez, Ball Ground, Ga. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.830, 256.45**
16. Carl Stevens, North Haledon, N.J. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.832, 254.47**

**ALTERNATES:** Sidnei Frigo - 5.843, 253.71; Pete Farber - 5.847, 246.30; Michael Biehle - 5.854, 252.52; Jeffrey Barker - 5.859, 254.42; Chuck Little - 5.860, 246.39; Rick Hord - 5.875, 248.80; Danny Rowe - 5.882, 247.61; Harry Hruska - 5.884, 250.37; Melanie Salemi - 5.905, 243.24; Eric Latino - 5.918, 247.47; Kenny Lang - 5.936, 243.63; Steve Matussek - 5.963, 246.71; Bill Glidden - 6.013, 235.47; Chip King - 6.021, 243.99; Richie Stevens - 6.051, 231.36; Rick Distefano - 6.149, 240.89; Clint Satterfield - 6.542, 238.93; Brandon Pesz - 7.398, 132.33; Ruben Tetsosvili - 11.255, 66.07.

PRO MOD CHAMPION RICKIE SMITH			
5.746-252.90 <b>CASTELLANA (.066)</b>	5.765-251.95 <b>CASTELLANA (.041)</b>	5.795-248.11 <b>JACKSON (.048)</b>	5.818-248.34 <b>JACKSON (.014)</b>
6.694-159.44 <b>C. STEVENS (.207)</b>	6.107-208.88 <b>CASTELLANA (.048)</b>	DISQ.-C/LINE <b>GREEN (.043)</b>	5.807-254.18 <b>GONZALEZ (.053)</b>
5.833-248.11 <b>TUTTEROW (.030)</b>	5.824-247.47 <b>TUTTEROW (.006)</b>	5.783-248.71 <b>GREEN (.038)</b>	5.788-248.29 <b>GREEN (.146)</b>
5.939-244.96 <b>RAY (.015)</b>	5.794-249.76 <b>SMITH (.025)</b>	6.597-159.91 <b>JANIS (.058)</b>	5.796-250.51 <b>alBALOOSHI (.231)</b>
5.802-249.90 <b>SMITH (.035)</b>	5.800-249.90 <b>SMITH (.044)</b>	5.806-247.02 <b>JANIS (.074)</b>	7.277-135.20 <b>MOLINARI (.054)</b>
8.363-121.78 <b>RAHAIM (.099)</b>	5.808-249.26 <b>SMITH (.037)</b>	5.927-244.47 <b>WINTERS (.023)</b>	6.174-200.56 <b>WINTERS (.014)</b>
5.869-250.88 <b>S. WHITELEY (.063)</b>	13.720-95.96 (FOUL) <b>J. WHITELEY (-.342)</b>	5.779-248.11 <b>JANIS (.066)</b>	5.765-248.93 <b>JANIS (.061)</b>
5.868-244.16 <b>J. WHITELEY (.063)</b>			5.830-254.86 <b>STEVENS (.047)</b>

**LOW E.T.: 5.746 - CASTELLANA**  
**TOP SPEED: 256.45 - GONZALEZ**