

CHAMPIONSHIP  
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LE Tonglet

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# THE BIG GO!

COMPLETE COVERAGE OF THE CHEVROLET PERFORMANCE U.S. NATIONALS

## GOING BIG

McMILLEN, TODD, GRAY, AND TONGLET GRAB INDY GLORY AT WORLD'S BIGGEST DRAG RACE

## CHAMPIONSHIP TIPSTER

WHO'S GOING TO WIN THE MELLO YELLO CHAMPIONSHIPS? WE THINK WE KNOW

# NOTES FROM THE PRO MOD REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

BY JIM LUIKENS

Stevie “Fast” Jackson took the NHRA E3 Spark Plugs Pro Mod Series by storm last year when he qualified No. 1 at his very first NHRA event, won two events, and finished a strong third in points.

The 2018 season started out quite similar for Jackson. He qualified at the first five events of the season and reached the final round in Charlotte, but a devastating crash in that final saw his primary car knocked out for the season. As a result, he had to go to his backup car, the Shadow 2.0, to finish this year. Two early-round losses and two DNQs marked the Shadow’s performance at its first four NHRA events.

It looked like it was going to be more of the same at Chevrolet Performance U.S. Nationals because Jackson was 29th on the qualifying sheet going into the fifth and final Pro Mod qualifying session, but in one the greatest Hail Mary drag racing passes of all times, he qualified in the 13th position with a great 5.848 elapsed time.

Three relatively uneventful round-wins on race day propelled Jackson to the final round, where he defeated Jose Gonzalez as both cars encountered trouble. Thanks to his first Indy win Jackson jumped all the way up to fifth in the standings with just four Pro Mod races remaining this season.



Marc Caruso

I always like it when new faces and new cars join the series. In Indy, we were lucky enough to have two new racers competing in an NHRA event for the first time. New York’s **Marc Caruso**, with Lee White as crew chief, fared the better of the two as he qualified 11th with a 5.836 elapsed time. On race day, he matched up against **Khalid alBalooshi** in the first round, and Caruso’s credible 5.881 elapsed time was barely eclipsed by alBalooshi’s 5.857-second run.

The other newcomer, **Jason Scruggs**, of Saltillo, Miss., is a big-time star in other Pro Mod series but didn’t fare as well as Caruso. In five rounds of qualifying, he produced a best elapsed time of 5.889-second, and although this elapsed time would have qualified at some other events, it was only good for 23rd out of 30 at the Big Go. We expect to see a lot more of Scruggs as time goes by.


Speaking of qualifying, Indy featured one of the largest Pro Mod fields of the season with 30 cars trying to snag one of the 16 starting spots. Interestingly, all 30 cars ran in the five-second zone with **Chip King’s** 5.852-second elapsed time holding down the bump spot. Mike Castellana, Gonzalez, and Troy Coughlin ran in the high 5.70s during qualifying to pace the quick field.

In addition to being quick, the Pro Mod field at the U.S. Nationals was fast. No less than 15 runs at more 250 mph

were recorded, with Gonzalez’s 255.58-mph run being the fastest of the group.

**Jeremy Ray** had quite a day on Sunday: He injured his engine during the final qualifying session on Sunday afternoon and then had to quickly prepare for Sunday night’s first round of eliminations. Ray was able to answer the first-round call thanks to the help of Chuck Ford and Jim Whiteley’s crew and won the round to advance to Monday’s second round, where he narrowly lost to eventual event runner-up Gonzalez.

**Erica Enders** had her best outing of her young Pro Mod career in Indy. After three consecutive DNQs, she bounced back at the U.S. Nationals with a 5.851 elapsed time to qualify for her first NHRA Pro Mod event. Enders lost in the first round, but it looks like her team has turned the corner and better days are ahead.

Mike Janis and Rickie Smith are tied at the top of the points with only 16 rounds of racing left this year. 



Jason Scruggs

## PRO MOD

1. Mike Castellana, Oyster Bay, N.Y. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.783, 250.92**
2. Jose Gonzalez, Ball Ground, Ga. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.796, 255.58**
3. Troy Coughlin, Delaware, Ohio ('67 Mustang) . . . . . **5.798, 255.19**
4. Sidnei Frigo, Itatiba, Brazil ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.810, 255.48**
5. Rickie Smith, King, N.C. ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.811, 250.18**
6. Khalid alBalooshi, Dubai, United Arab Emirates ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.814, 250.46**
7. Jeremy Ray, Lugoff, S.C. ('63 Corvette) . . . . . **5.817, 246.66**
8. Chad Green, Midland, Texas ('17 Corvette) . . . . . **5.820, 248.20**
9. Mike Janis, Lancaster, N.Y. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.821, 246.75**
10. Shane Molinari, Battle Ground, Wash. ('68 Firebird) . . . . . **5.832, 254.14**
11. Marc Caruso, Fairport, N.Y. ('69 Camaro) . . . . . **5.836, 245.63**
12. Bob Rahaim, Grosse Pointe, Mich. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.847, 248.07**
13. Steve Jackson, Evans, Ga. ('17 Camaro) . . . . . **5.848, 246.71**
14. Michael Biehle, North Vernon, Ind. ('67 Mustang) . . . . . **5.850, 254.71**
15. Erica Enders, Houston, Texas ('18 Camaro) . . . . . **5.851, 250.92**
16. Chip King, Roxboro, N.C. ('69 Daytona) . . . . . **5.852, 249.16**

ALTERNATES: Dan Stevenson - 5.855, 254.33; Jim Whiteley - 5.862, 245.76; Steve Matussek - 5.867, 248.11; Steven Whiteley - 5.871, 246.08; Danny Rowe - 5.880, 248.29; Pete Farber - 5.885, 244.34; Jason Scruggs - 5.889, 245.72; Todd Tuttorow - 5.891, 242.63; Rick Hord - 5.902, 247.07; Doug Winters - 5.907, 242.10; Harry Hruska - 5.925, 245.14; Michael Bowman - 5.930, 253.33; Bill Glidden - 5.955, 238.34; Clint Satterfield - 5.978, 241.41.

### PRO MOD CHAMPION

## STEVE JACKSON

6.114-193.02 <b>CASTELLANA (.026)</b>	5.798-251.30 <b>CASTELLANA (.039)</b>	5.819-255.05 <b>GONZALEZ (.017)</b>	5.797-255.05 <b>GONZALEZ (.045)</b>
7.248-135.08 <b>KING (.070)</b>	5.856-250.37 <b>CASTELLANA (.021)</b>	5.847-253.42 <b>GONZALEZ (.072)</b>	5.871-248.34 <b>ENDERS (.015)</b>
22.858-73.05 <b>GREEN (1.107)</b>	7.326-136.33 <b>JANIS (.068)</b>	5.838-245.81 <b>RAY (.048)</b>	5.835-245.94 <b>RAY (.083)</b>
5.827-246.12 <b>JANIS (.024)</b>	6.167-168.51 <b>JACKSON (.038)</b>	6.682-189.26 <b>GONZALEZ (.009)</b>	6.907-158.56 <b>MOLINARI (.076)</b>
DISQ.-C/LINE <b>FRIGO (.008)</b>	5.835-246.89 <b>JACKSON (.065)</b>	8.889-83.08 <b>COUGHLIN (.009)</b>	DISQ.-C/LINE <b>COUGHLIN (.036)</b>
5.843-246.21 <b>JACKSON (.018)</b>	5.843-246.84 <b>JACKSON (.014)</b>	5.917-246.84 <b>alBALOOSHI (.084)</b>	5.820-255.19 <b>BIEHLE (.035)</b>
5.861-249.35 <b>SMITH (.057)</b>	5.895-246.98 <b>RAHAIM (.164)</b>	5.857-248.98 <b>alBALOOSHI (.071)</b>	5.857-249.35 <b>alBALOOSHI (.036)</b>
5.826-248.02 <b>RAHAIM (.076)</b>			5.881-244.16 <b>CARUSO (.044)</b>

**LOW E.T.: 5.783 - CASTELLANA**  
**TOP SPEED: 255.58 - GONZALEZ**